

Veteran Health Indiana

Psychology Practicum Training Brochure

Psychology Setting

Veteran Health Indiana is comprised of the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center, a Category 1A facility located in the heart of downtown Indianapolis, and seven community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) in Bloomington, Brownsburg, Martinsville, Shelbyville, Wakeman, and West Lafayette. Taken together, Veteran Health Indiana serves Veterans from a 45-county area in Indiana and Illinois. The Psychiatry Service employs 46 psychologists and includes programs representing the entire continuum of mental health services. We maintain academic affiliations with seven APA-Accredited graduate psychology programs at six different universities including University of Indianapolis, Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis, Ball State University, Indiana State University, Indiana University-Bloomington, and Purdue University.

The psychology staff members at our facility are supervised by an Executive Psychologist who reports to the Chief of Psychiatry. The psychologists are organized into six groups based on similarity of function, purpose, or activities. The training program is overseen by Executive Psychologist, Shannon Woller, Psy.D, ABPP, and is managed by the Interim Training Director, Dr. Allison Rodgers.

Each December, available supervisors will communicate their interest in supervising a practicum student to the Psychology Training Director. The Training Director will then submit the list of interested supervisors to the Senior Psychologist and Chief of Psychiatry for approval. Once approved, the Training Director will post the available practicum opportunities on the psychology training webpage. Individual supervisors are not to coordinate practicum experiences with university training directors. All communication between universities and the VA regarding availability of practicum experiences will be conducted through the VA Psychology Training Director.

Current Training Opportunities

Domiciliary Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (DRRTP) (One practicum student)

Supervisor: Sarah Horine, PsyD

The mission of the Domiciliary is to provide an opportunity for Veterans to participate in a residential, rehabilitative therapeutic community. Veterans will be supported to achieve their optimal level of functioning and return to independent living. Specialized services are provided in a therapeutic residential community and are based on psychosocial rehabilitation and

recovery-oriented principles. The Domiciliary is a program for homeless Veterans to transition to independent housing. The Domiciliary program provides Veterans with 24/7 structured, stable housing and an opportunity to address issues that contributed to one's homelessness. The Domiciliary uses the recovery model, which is based on principles of personal responsibility, partnership, empowerment, interdependence, skill development, use of social supports, and clean and sober recreation.

The Domiciliary program utilizes the therapeutic community as its model of care. This mutual self-help approach is based on the belief that a community with a common goal can accomplish more than one can alone. Domiciliary Veterans are expected to work through the process of recovery together, assisting one another, providing peer support, and intervening when appropriate and necessary to maximize every community member's chance of success. The DRRTP is located in Lawrence, IN about 14 miles from the main hospital. The DRRTP is located right next to Fort Benjamin Harrison State Park. The DRRTP has 50 beds: 45 male and 5 female. The Domiciliary is a therapeutic living environment with 24/7 VA nursing staff, 3 meals every day and support from dietitian, and individual furnished rooms. Veterans participate in a variety of services while at the DRRTP including case management by social workers, group therapy from the interdisciplinary team, individual therapy with clinical psychologist, employment assistance with a vocational rehabilitation specialist, chaplain/spiritual services, medication and disease education by a clinical pharmacist, recreational therapy and assistance with developing therapeutic leisure activities, psychiatry medication management, primary medical needs by nurse practitioner, financial education, and peer support.

Trainees within the DRRTP rotation will gain experience completing psychotherapy intake evaluations, individual psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, participation in daily multidisciplinary treatment team meetings as well as progress toward completion meetings. The goal of psychotherapy interventions is to address mental health and/or substance use that may create barriers to maintaining independent living.

Neuropsychology (Four practicum students)

Supervisors: Gili Goldfrad, PsyD; Ryan Greene, PsyD; Jay Summers, PhD

Preferred: 2-2.5 days per week

This practicum offers exclusively outpatient neuropsychological assessment experience. The neuropsychology program provides clinical consultation to the entire VA healthcare facility. Typical diagnoses seen in clinic include cortical and subcortical dementia due to various etiologies, mild cognitive impairment, and cognitive dysfunction associated with traumatic brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, infections, and mood disorders. Other referral issues are related to mental capacity and appropriateness for medical procedures. Patients referred to the program typically complete a 4-6 hour neuropsychological evaluation. Trainees can expect to learn a standard clinical interview and a flexible battery of neuropsychological tests including

those designed to assess engagement in the testing process. Learners will become proficient in electronic medical record review, test administration and scoring, data interpretation, diagnostic conceptualization and treatment recommendation generation, and neuropsychological report creation. The opportunity to observe and participate in feedback sessions is also available. Supervision is done on a one-to-one basis with a board-certified or board-eligible neuropsychologist. In addition to clinical experience, we offer a mandatory, weekly 60-minute group supervision didactic (Tuesdays at 7:30 AM), attended by pre-doctoral practicum trainees and interns. Content includes topics on relevant neuropsychological topics and fact-finding exercises. All learners also present a 60-minute end-of-year presentation on a topic of their choice.

Severe Mental Illness (Four practicum students)

Supervisor: Paul Lysaker, PhD

Preferred: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday

This practicum experience focuses on long term psychotherapy with veterans with significant mental health needs including those related to schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, personality disorders, substance use, and trauma. Treatment is delivered in the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), an outpatient clinic housing within the larger medical center. The PRRC is made up of an interdisciplinary team including psychologists, psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, social workers and graduate level trainees. Group programming offers a range of possible experiences, including process groups and social skills training. Patients seen in PRRC engage in group and individual therapy, and family counseling if desired.

Many of the patients treated in the PRRC have complex mental health needs which include potentially early trauma, social adversity, and multiple comorbid psychiatric and non-psychiatric medical conditions. The treatment is individualized and conceptualized as something that develops as the patient and clinician get to know one another. This rotation offers a strong recovery framework in which meaningful recovery must be directed by the patient. The clinical work and supervision is based on a metacognitive model of serious mental illness and personality disorders (Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy; MERIT) which stresses interventions that assist clients to utilize integrated ideas about themselves and others to decide how to effectively respond to the psychosocial challenges posed by psychiatric conditions. It is an integrative and flexible approach in that it describes principles that can be adapted by therapists from other perspectives in order to promote metacognition and help clients meaningfully recover. This work, rather than focusing on the contents of thoughts alone, is interested in how information is pieced together to form a sense of the larger social world and to decide how to manage emotional pain. Emphasis will be placed on developing an understanding of barriers to recovery, which include stigma, emotion dysregulation, deficits in social cognition and metacognition, as well as methods used to formally assess these barriers and intervene accordingly.

Services offered include recovery focused individual and group psychotherapies, with an emphasis on metacognitively oriented treatments such as Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT). Practicum students have an opportunity to learn to deliver these interventions to groups and individuals within the clinic and there are opportunities to participate in ongoing clinical research.

Palliative Care (One practicum student)

Supervisor: Jeff Lightfoot, PhD, HSPP

Preferred: Wednesdays are required, with option to choose Tuesday or Thursday

The purpose of this practicum experience is to provide students with an opportunity to provide integrative and tailored care with Veterans facing complex medical situations. The goal of the PC psychologist is to provide a more meaningful, patient-focused care experience that improves the quality of life of veterans and their families as they face life-limiting illness.

Palliative care psychologists work with Veterans and their families by providing individual and group psychotherapy, goals of care discussions, assessment, and behavioral interventions. For families, support for caregivers, bereavement support and family meetings are provided. Clinical issues addressed include end of life support, anxiety/depression, grief and loss, existential distress, risk assessments, dementia, family dynamics, caregiver burden and PTSD.

Students will spend their time working as an integrated member of the palliative care team to provide assistance with biopsychosocial-spiritual case conceptualization, patient and program advocacy and administrative/leadership support. Students will attend inpatient rounds, interdisciplinary team meetings for inpatients and outpatients and will provide bedside and outpatient care. Students will learn how to assess palliative and end of life needs and determine the appropriate adaptations of protocol-based interventions to facilitate the best balance of care through individualized approaches to address Veteran needs.

Students will learn how to apply a stepped-care model of assessment and intervention for Veterans with mental health, adjustment-related concerns and end of life concerns. Students will learn to assess goals of care and facilitate discussions of care-related issues with Veterans and their families. Students will apply a broad range of clinical interventions within the context of life-limiting illness. Supervision will be provided on a weekly basis. Students may also participate in training events, provide consultation to palliative care team members and other healthcare providers.

Roles and Responsibilities of Practicum Students

- Conduct Triage Assessments
- Manage a caseload of patients
- Attending team meetings

- Collaborating and consulting with providers involved in patient care

LGBTQ+ Health (One practicum student)

Supervisor: Heather Sperry, PhD

Preferred days: Monday, Tuesday (1-2 days per week)

This practicum experience is focused on enhancing knowledge and service delivery to LGBTQ+ Veterans. Practicum students will develop skills, knowledge, and expertise related to the intersection of LGBTQ+ and Veteran identities. They will work directly with the LGBTQ+ Program Manager and have opportunities to collaborate and consult across service lines as needed (e.g., Primary Care, Mental Health, Prosthetics, Endocrinology, Speech Pathology, Dermatology).

The practicum student will have opportunities to co-facilitate groups (e.g., LGBTQ+ Support Group, Transgender/Gender Diverse Support Group, PRIDE In All Who Served), conduct hormone and surgery readiness evaluations, and provide consultation and care coordination (e.g., receive new referrals and connect LGBTQ+ Veterans to relevant resources). Although the majority of psychotherapy for LGBTQ+ Veterans is provided through the general mental health clinic there may be opportunities to provide psychotherapy during this practicum. Pending the practicum student's completion of clinical hours there are also leadership and professional development opportunities. The practicum student may provide trainings to VA staff, attend meetings with leadership, engage in outreach activities, etc. LGBTQ+ programming is growing rapidly across Veteran's Healthcare Administration and within Veteran Health Indiana so clinical and leadership opportunities are subject to change.

Prerequisites

Applicants must meet the following to be considered for our program:

1. Doctoral student in clinical or counseling psychology program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), or PCSAS (Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System)
2. Practicum students are subject to fingerprinting, background checks, and urine drug screens. Placement decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
3. Practicum students are also required to meet the essential functions (physical and mental) of the training program and immunized following current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and VHA policy for healthcare workers to protect themselves, other employees and patients while working in a healthcare facility. This requirement is met by verification of the practicum student's doctoral program Director of Clinical Training or designee. The DCT must verify that the student has...

- a. Satisfactory health to perform the duties of the clinical training program
- b. Recent TB screen
- c. Hepatitis B vaccination or have signed declination waivers

Application Due Date: January 31, 2024

Application Process

Submit the following items via email to Dr. Allison Rodgers (Allison.rodgers@va.gov) The subject line should read “Practicum Application 2024-2025”

1. Practicum Application Cover Sheet (see below)
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. Graduate Transcript (can be unofficial)

Selection Processes:

Once applications are received, the Training Director will send completed applications to the supervisor of the experience in which the applicant expressed interest. Supervisors will then have time to review the applications and schedule interviews accordingly. We expect that applicants will be informed of their application status by mid-March and that practicum offers will be extended by the end of March.

Practicum Structure:

Practicum placements typically begin in fall (August, September) and end in late April/May. Regarding hours, practicum students can dedicate 1-3 days on-site. There may be work required offsite consisting of readings relevant to the practicum.

COVID-19 Impact on Training

The ongoing pandemic has created numerous challenges and our training program strives for transparency in providing detailed information about how training has been or may be impacted. This means that we cannot definitively predict how specific training experiences may evolve for the 2024-2025 training year. We can reasonably say that there will be continued utilization of telehealth and technology-based delivery platforms. We do not expect that there will be any significant changes to the base clinical services or populations served through rotations described in our brochure. Most outpatient clinics have returned to providing face-to-face clinical services. When seeing patients in person, the required PPE will be provided.

Veteran Health Indiana
Psychology Practicum Application Cover Sheet

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Best phone number to reach you: _____

Graduate Program: _____

Director of Clinical Training _____

Graduate program APA-Accredited? **Yes** **No**

Type of Program? **Clinical** **Counseling** **Degree:** **PhD** **PsyD**

Year in Program: _____

Please indicate the areas of training to which you are applying:

____ Neuropsychology ____ Palliative Care
____ Severe Mental Illness ____ LGBTQ+ Health
____ Domiciliary RRTP

Email application materials to:

Dr. Allison Rodgers (Allison.rodgers@va.gov)

Subject line: Practicum Application 2024-2025